

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

**Remarks in an Exchange With Reporters Prior to Departure for Camp David,
Maryland**

January 27, 2023

Death of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee/Potential Civil Unrest

Q. Talk to us about Tyre Nichols, Mr. President.

The President. Yes. I spoke with Tyre's mother and expressed my condolences and told her that I was going to be making the case to the Congress, they should pass the George Floyd Act. We should get this under control. I can only do so much in an Executive order at a Federal level.

And the prayer—I was really pleased that she called for no—peaceful protests, no—no violence, no movement at all. And so I—you know, I spoke with her about, I don't know, 10, 15 minutes. And——

Q. Are you going to visit—[*inaudible*—]—in a month?

Q. How concerned are you, sir, about the violence and the potential for that?

The President. Well—well, I am. I'm obviously very concerned about it. But I think she has made a very strong plea. She's obviously in enormous pain.

She talked about, as you heard her when she spoke publicly—but she also talked about how—how she didn't know what she was going to do. And I told her that——

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*].

The President. ——that it—that—I told her I had some idea of what that loss was like and that although it's impossible to believe now, the time will come when his memory brings a smile before a tear. And she said she already is thinking about what he would want her to do, which is very positive. So——

Calls for Peaceful Protests in Response to the Death of Tyre Nichols

Q. What is at stake tonight, sir, with the Nation watching this videotape and what could happen? What is at stake?

The President. What's at stake is, first of all, innocent people's lives, number one.

Number two, it has a lot to say and do with the image of America. It has a lot to do with whether or not we are the country we say we are, that we're a country of law and order and means by which we can peacefully protest and let the courts make their judgments.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:49 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to boarding Marine One. In his remarks, he referred to RowVaughn Wells, mother of Tyre Nichols, who died on January 10 as a result of injuries he received during an encounter with Memphis, TN, police officers following a traffic stop on January 7.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters, White House.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Nichols, Tyre; Wells, RowVaughn.

Subjects: News media, Presidential interviews; Policing best practices, improvement efforts; Tennessee, police-involved beating and death in Memphis.

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